



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Sula Ranger District

7338 Hwy 93 S.  
Sula, MT 59871  
406-821-3201

File Code: 1950

Date: April 2, 2007

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APR / 3 2007

Ravalli County Commissioners

Dear Interested Party:

### **Important Information for People Wishing to Comment on this Project**

Public comments are invited on the Springer II – Hazardous Fuels Reduction project. Tracy Hollingshead, the Sula District Ranger, is the Responsible official for this project.

As you recall, the original scoping effort for this project began with meetings and field trips back in 2002. On July 22, 2003, a Press Release was issued inviting the public to comment on the project and to attend a field trip on July 29<sup>th</sup>. A letter was also mailed on July 24, 2003 to all individuals maintaining an Upper East Fork or Sula address, and to those that had previously expressed interest in this type of project on the Sula District. Two hundred sixty-six copies were mailed. This letter was also posted at the Sula Post Office, Sula Country Store, and the Sula Community Club House. The Public Meeting and field trip was held on July 29, 2003.

This project is now subject to the 2003 notice, comment, and appeal procedures at 36 CFR 215 and this legal notice begins the official comment period designated under these regulations. Only those who provide comments or other expression of interest during this comment period will be accepted as appellants.

To be timely, comments for this proposed project must be postmarked or received within 30 days after the legal notice is published in the Ravalli Republic.

The project area includes National Forest land adjacent to the Upper East Fork community in portions of sections 16, 19-21 and 28-30 in Township 2 North; Range 17 West; and portions of sections 24-25 in Township 2 North; Range 18 West, approximately 6 miles east of Sula, Montana on the southside of Forest Road 472.

Several treatments will occur according to specific ground and fuel conditions on 263 acres across a project area of 1,600 acres. Fuels thinning on 70 acres will occur with removal by skyline yarder followed by broadcast burning. Conifer planting will occur on 70 acres after salvage and broadcast burn. Fuels thinning, hand piling and pile burning will occur on 63 acres. Fuels underburning will occur over 129 acres. All forested treatments areas may have follow-up maintenance burns after initial treatments (estimated to be 5-11 years later) depending upon re-aggregation of fuels. No permanent roads will be constructed; however, some temporary roads may be necessary to harvest some units.



My preliminary determination is that this proposal can be categorically excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS because it fits categories 31.2 - #5 and #10 described in Forest Service Handbook id\_1909.15-2004-3, July 6, 2004, and no extraordinary circumstances exist. Category #5 provides for "*Regeneration of an area to native tree species, including site preparation which does not involve the use of herbicides or result in vegetation type conversion.*" Category #10 provides for "*Hazardous fuels reduction activities using prescribed fire, not to exceed 4,500 acres, and mechanical methods for crushing, piling, thinning, pruning, cutting, chipping, mulching, and mowing, not to exceed 1,000 acres.*"

### **How to Comment and Timeframe**

Comments can be written, faxed, hand delivered, or electronic.

Written comments should be mailed to: District Ranger, Sula Ranger District, 7338 Highway 93 South, Sula, MT 59871.

The Sula Ranger District FAX number is 406-821-2340.

The Sula Ranger District telephone number is 406-821-3201.

The Sula Ranger District office is open from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday for those who want to submit hand-delivered comments.

Electronic comments may be sent to [comments-northern-bitterroot-sula@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-northern-bitterroot-sula@fs.fed.us)

Acceptable electronic formats are ASCII text, HTML, MS Word, Word Perfect, or Rich Text Format (RTF).

It is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely receipt of any form of comment. For electronically mailed comments, the sender may receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation or receipt.

Comments should include: 1) name, address, phone number, and organization represented, if any; 2) title of project on which the comments are being submitted; and 3) substantive comments including specific facts and supporting information for the District Ranger to consider. The names and addresses of people submitting comments will be included as part of the public record.

Each individual or a representative from each organization submitting substantive comments must either sign the comments or be prepared to verify their identity upon request.

If you would like more information, please call Kit Buell, Project Leader, at the West Fork Ranger District (406) 821- 1251 or [kbuell@fs.fed.us](mailto:kbuell@fs.fed.us).

Sincerely,



TRACY M. HOLLINGSHEAD  
Sula District Ranger




Enclosures – map

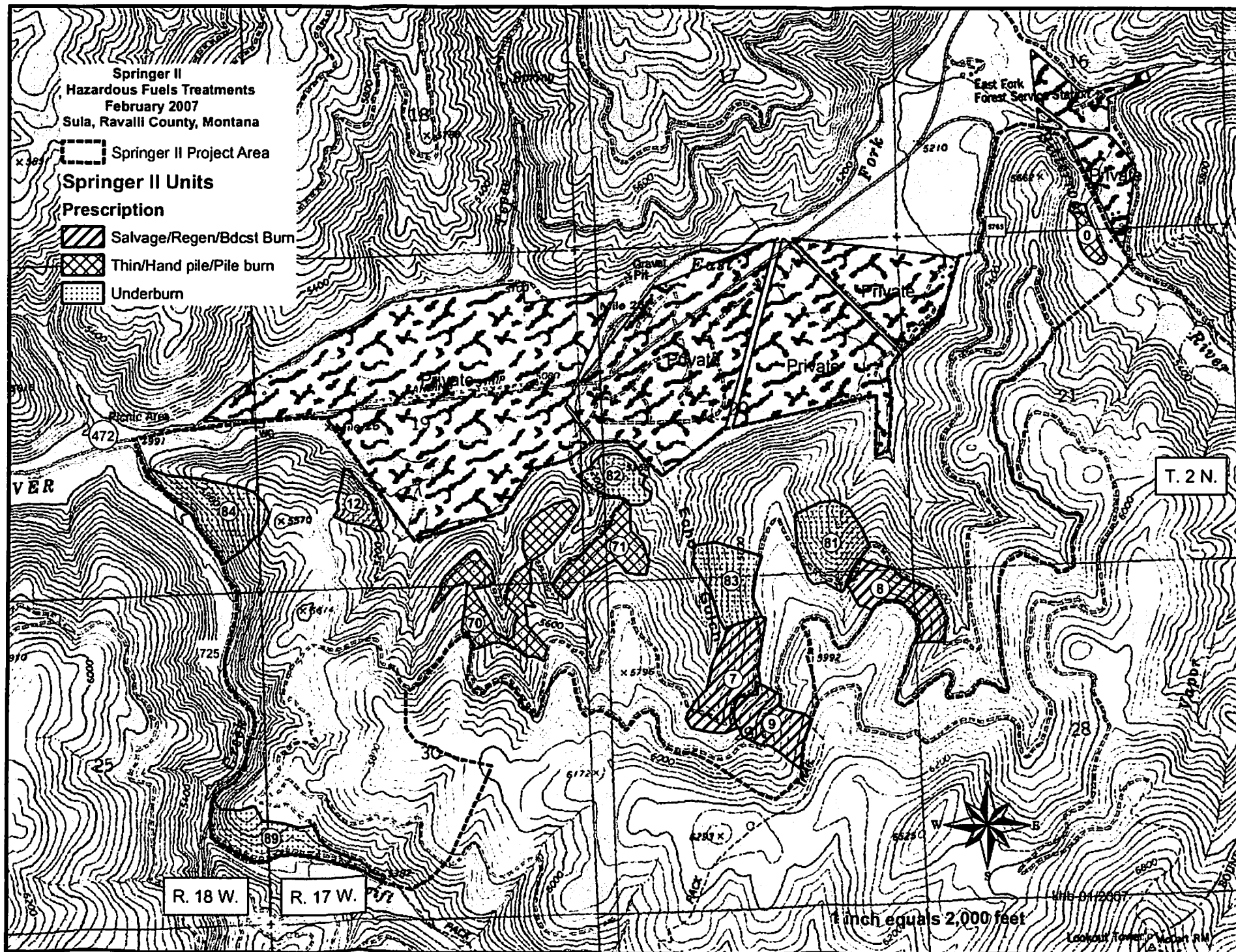
Springer II  
Hazardous Fuels Treatments  
February 2007  
Sula, Ravalli County, Montana

Springer II Project Area

Springer II Units

Prescription

-  Salvage/Regen/Bdcst Burn
-  Thin/Hand pile/Pile burn
-  Underburn



DATE: 11/11/2001  
SECTION: 1020